1941

EDITORIALS

We stand for the constitution of the United States with its three departments of government as therein set forth, each one fully independent in its own field.

The Deseret News Salt Lake City, Utah July 7, 1947

What Deer Creek Means to Utah

THAT Deer Creek water will begin to flow into the thirsty Salt Lake Valley by July, 1949, is a refreshing announcement to the whole intermountain west. It means more than is casually supposed.

As long ago as 1856 Brigham Young had spoken of diverting the waters of the Provo River into the Salt Lake Valley, and finally in 1941 when the Deer Creek Dam began to back up some 150,000 acre-feet of water along the Provo River bed, the century-old dream began taking on the form of reality. Now it is almost certain that the summer of 1949 will not pass before the full Salt Lake Aqueduct load is turned from the Provo River into the capital city's water mains, thus doubling our present culinary water supply.

Substantial completion of the Salt Lake Aqueduct two years hence was virtually assured by the act of the Bureau of Reclamation in letting a $1,620,884 contract for laying a 7.5 mile-long link from a point immediately west of the entrance to Little Cottonwood Canyon to the Samuel Park Reservoir. This final destination of the aqueduct is a few blocks north of Thirty-third South Street and west of Wasatch Boulevard.

When this link is completed it is planned to pump the Provo River water into the system at a point 5.5 miles below the Deer Creek Dam. Present costs prohibit completion of this final link on the upper end of the aqueduct. Bureau officials report, however, that should 1948 turn out to be a dry year it would be possible to use part of the aqueduct's carrying load as far as the Little Cottonwood conduit. Rainfall this season has assured a sufficient valley water supply for usual needs, and so there is no worry at this time. But all in all the Salt Lake Valley water picture is much brighter now than ever before.

Water is already being diverted at the rate of some 50,000 acre-feet a year from the Weber to the Provo River by way of the Weber-Provo Canal. When the entire Provo River Project, of which the Deer Creek Dam and Salt Lake Aqueduct are parts, is completed, it will also take water from the Duchesne River in the Uintas and divert it through a tunnel in the Wasatch Mountains into both Salt Lake and Utah Valleys.

Although not yet fully developed and as yet slightly more than five years old the Deer Creek Reservoir has been more than a boon to Utah County farmers. This county now ranks 85th among the 3070 counties of the nation as a producer of crops. Where only some 25,000 acres were available for cultivation in the Deer Creek area in 1942, the total is now somewhere around 40,000 acres. Where the total crop value was only about $1,500,000 in 1942 it has now jumped to well over $5,000,000 a year. And where the average income per acre was less than $60 in 1942, it had climbed to over $150 per acre by 1945. These are some of the agricultural benefits of large scale reclamation projects.

Farmers say that sufficient water in July and August can double the weight of a peach by adding half an inch to the circumference. When a late-season supply of water is not assured farmers plant alfalfa and grains; when a dependable supply of water is available for late irrigation, farmers turn to more remunerative row crops and fruits.

Then too one of the factors influencing the location of the Geneva Steel Plant in Utah County was its ability to lease Deer Creek storage water from the Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake. And as an interesting side light there are those who note that the Deer Creek Reservoir is fast coming into its own as a fishing and boating resort.

Water is the life-blood of the otherwise arid west and the more we can develop this great natural resource along the lines planned and announced by the Bureau of Reclamation, the greater will be our prosperity and the stability of our society.

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